



Media Release

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pr1060 – Recycling hits target.doc

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photo opportunity – launch of plastic recycling bank - see below

RECYCLING HITS TARGET AND STRETCHES TO PLASTIC

As Environment Minister Elliot Morley urges householders and businesses across the country to recycle during National Recycling Week (18 October), he has written to Harrogate Borough Council congratulating the district's recycling efforts. The government has set local authorities stringent targets to reach for the recycling of waste. Residents, businesses and the council's own staff have helped the council achieve its target of 14% set for this year. In his letter, Mr Morley said he was ... "very grateful for the substantial commitment {you} have demonstrated to improving recycling and composting rates, and working for a more sustainable approach to waste management".

A new national campaign – Recycle Now – the biggest ever to get England recycling is being spearheaded by a multi-media advertising campaign. The Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has provided more than £30 million in funding to help get people recycling.

Councillor Les Ellington, Cabinet Member for Environmental Health, said: "Whilst we are very grateful for Mr Morley's congratulations for the efforts the district has made, we would have welcomed some of this cash. We were asked to make a bid for a share of this funding, but once again we were overlooked.

"The government is asking us to reach very difficult targets but has not provided us with any extra funding to either improve recycling or to help publicise it. However, the council has provided a kerbside recycling facility for over 50,000 homes in the district. And we are extremely grateful to everyone for their enthusiastic take-up of the service. But if we are to meet our target of 21% for 2005/2006, we have to continually improve recycling facilities."

Many residents are keen to recycle more than just paper, jars and cans and in particular have concern over the recycling of plastic.

Councillor Ellington added: "We get many calls a week from residents asking about plastic bottle recycling. Whilst plastic takes many years to breakdown in a landfill site, it is a difficult material to collect for recycling due to its lightweight, yet bulky composition. However, a trial in Ripon has proved so successful that the bank located at Morrisons is to be retained and we have just purchased a bank for Sainsbury's store in Harrogate. The cost of provision of banks and collection of plastic from just these two sites is expected to be in the region of £12,000 this year. We will be considering sometime in the future the collection of plastics as part of the kerbside recycling schemes. Currently, we have over 87 mini-recycling sites across the district for paper, glass and cans"

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: 4.15 pm Wednesday, 20 October 2004 Sainsbury's mini-recycling site, Wetherby Road, Harrogate (car park). The first plastic to be put into the new plastic recycling bank will be placed by Pannal Scout Group. Members of the group are keen on protecting the environment and when they heard about this new recycling facility they got in touch and asked to be involved. They have been collecting plastic over the past few weeks for this launch event.

FURTHER INFORMATION : Councillor Les Ellington is available for comment on 01423 712461. Further technical information from Simon Johnson, Head of Environment on 01423 556845.